

*The Hand of God acknowledged in the Loss of en-
deared Relatives, and such affecting Dispensations
improved.*

123.

A

S E R M O N,

OCCASIONED BY THE MUCH LAMENTED DEATH OF

ELIZABETH BOWDEN,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE NOVEMBER 15, 1793,
AGED SEVENTEEN YEARS,

PREACHED AT

LOWER-TOOTING, IN SURRY,

NOVEMBER 24, 1793.

By *JAMES BOWDEN.* K

I WAS DUMB; I OPENED NOT MY MOUTH, BECAUSE THOU DIDST IT.

Pfalm xxxix. 9.

THE LORD GAVE, AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY, BLESSED BE
THE NAME OF THE LORD.

Job. i. 21.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF MANY WHO HEARD IT.

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53

The Island of God's Head in the Lake of Geneva
The Island of God's Head in the Lake of Geneva
The Island of God's Head in the Lake of Geneva

S E R M O N

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF A YOUNG MAN

ELIASH WINDEN



WHO DIED AT THE AGE OF 21 YEARS

LOWRY FOOTING IN GENEVA

ON THE 11th OF NOVEMBER 1811

BY JAMES WINDEN

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA

AND OF THE CHURCH OF ST. PIERRE

IN THE CITY OF GENEVA

ON THE 11th OF NOVEMBER 1811

THE FIRST PART OF A SERMON

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Funeral Discourse was prepared, without any Purpose of submitting it to the Eye of the Public: but the Author has yielded to the Solicitations of many, and those especially of the younger Part of his Audience; hoping, from the Impressions that it appeared to have made on those who heard it, that it might, under the Influence of a Divine Blessing, prove the Occasion of lasting Benefit to others into whose Hands it may fall. In this Hope he is encouraged, by the happy Effects which a Discourse, occasioned by a similar Providence, appeared to produce on the Mind of the deceased.

Tooting, Dec. 5, 1793.



A

SERMON, &c.

I FEEL, my dear friends, very unequal to the service in which I am now engaging: but I have confidence in the grace of the good SPIRIT OF GOD, and in your candor and prayers. You will bear with me, while I vary from my usual form of address, and preach, not so much to the congregation in general, as to myself and my family.

As the ground of my discourse, I wish to adopt the words which David once used respecting an awful, yet blessed be GOD, not a similar Providence.

1 Chron. Ch. xv. Ver. 13.

*"The LORD our GOD made a breach upon
"us."*

ADVERTING to the dispensation to which David has respect in these words, it is to be observed, that the *ark* of

GOD, in the days of Eli, had been taken captive by the Philistines. Soon, however, it was brought back, as far as to Kirjath-jearim. But though the *ark* was Israel's peculiar glory, Saul seems to have set little value upon it. He did not covet its presence. David was of another spirit: he had no sooner obtained the government, than his pious soul panted with a desire to be honoured with the presence of the *ark* in the royal city. Great errors, however, were committed in the first attempt which was made to bring it thither. It was put on a cart: but the ordinance of GOD required, that it should be carried on the shoulders of the priests—GOD had appointed that none but the Levites should touch it, on pain of death: Uzza was not of the family of Levi, but inconsiderately, perhaps, rather than presumptuously, he put forth his hand to support it when shaken. Uzza was struck dead on the spot by the immediate hand of God.

A breach was hereby made on the company engaged in this pious business; and they were too much terrified to proceed.

Three

Three months after, however, a second attempt was made; when the directions of God's word were strictly attended to, and the *ark* was brought in solemn triumph to *Jerusalem*.

Blessed be God, we have not the terrors of that visitation to deplore, in the Providence we have now to improve. With this view I wish,

FIRST, To offer some remarks on the present affecting visitation, and the breach it has made.

SECONDLY, To call our attention to some reasons for submission to the will of God, in that providence by which HE has made a breach upon us.

THIRDLY, To notice the further improvement which death breaches call for.

I. To offer some remarks on the present affecting visitation, and the breach it has made.

My heart rejoices in the persuasion I have just hinted, that it is not a dispensation of *wrath*. We are not called to mourn, as Eli, over children, whose presumptuous sins

brought on their guilty heads the threatened vengeance of Heaven—Nor as Aaron over children struck dead by the immediate and wrathful hand of God—Nor as David over a darling child, perishing in the very act of rebellion. It is no angry breach that is made upon us. Nor is it so *wide* a breach, as death sometimes makes. As when the *head* and *support* of a family is removed—or when the *all* of creature comfort is taken away. Our affliction is not like that of the poor woman, whom the compassionate Jesus met, following the remains of her *only son* to the grave, herself being at the same time a *widow**. No—nor is it a *hopeless* and *perpetual* breach. It is true, our dear child is gone “the way from whence she “ shall not return.” For a time she is lost to us; but she has found a better home, a better rest. The “earthly house of her “tabernacle” is fallen; but the happy Spirit has gained “a building of God, an house “not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.” She has found more delightful

* Luke vii. 12.

society, more exalted employments, more satisfying joys. She has reached "the end of her faith; the joy, the glory of her LORD;" and in glad surprize exults, "*the one half was not told me!*"

Yet death breaches are always *awful*; they are ever *painful* and *affecting*. When death enters a family, and interrupts the intercourses of endeared friendship; and "the desire of our eyes," and the delight of our heart, is "taken away with a stroke," it were impious to "*despise* the chastening of the LORD," and refuse the parting tear. JESUS himself weeps at the tomb of Lazarus, and has provided the choicest comforts for them that mourn.

One circumstance, I wish especially to notice, respecting the breach we are now endeavouring to improve, and that is, that it is a *first breach*.

When death first enters a family, it brings a solemn warning. Ah, my dear fellow mourners, it speaks to all, but its voice is especially directed to *you* and to *me*: and this is the admonition it brings, "be ye also
"ready."

“ ready.” Which of us may receive the next summons, we know not. Oh, may it find none of us unprepared, none of us unwilling to obey !

I said, I rejoiced in the persuasion, that the present is not a dispensation of wrath : yet my heart will not suffer me to say, that the LORD our GOD saw no iniquity in us, which HE meant by this providence to rebuke. It becomes us, however, “ to search
“ and try our hearts, and to see if there be
“ any allowed evil in us.”

Perhaps the *spirit of prayer* was declining, and we needed a loud alarm in Providence to rouse and revive “ the things that
“ remained and were ready to die.”

Perhaps the dear delight possessed *too large a share in our affections*, and GOD in mercy “ prepared a worm” to prey on the pleasant gourd, that, taught by painful disappointment, we may cry, “ Return unto thy rest,
“ oh my soul !”

Perhaps the important *trust*, committed to us, was not discharged with that fidelity and affectionate sollicitude, with that singleness

ness

ness of heart to the glory of GOD, that it ought and might have been.

Yet who can tell? 'Tis possible that reasons of a different nature directed the determination of an all-disposing PROVIDENCE in this event. Perhaps GOD foresaw the temptations and troubles, to which this feeble labourer in HIS vineyard would be exposed, in more advanced life; and therefore compassionately granted her both her dismissal and recompense, before the burden and heat of the day came on. Or perhaps the adored SOVEREIGN and FRIEND of Believers saw in her so much of the lovely traces of HIS own image, "the beauty of the LORD our GOD," that it was especially HIS will, that she should "be with HIM, "where HE is, to behold his glory." It is manifest, HE often takes those first whom HE loves best.

Doubtless, however, this was "the will "of GOD," respecting survivors, "even our "sanctification." HE would try our patient resignation to HIS disposing will—HE would try the sincerity of our heart in the profession we have made, of leaving all to follow HIM

—HE

—HE would improve the spirituality of our temper; and teach us, in the absence of an endeared creature delight, to rise with more ardent affection and enlarged desire “to God “our exceeding joy”—HE would teach us the vanity of all earthly good; and quicken us in our attention to the great concerns of another world.—Yes, my Brethren, it is by affliction God is pleased to call us aside, from the noise and hurry of the world, to listen to his instructive and cheering voice. Affliction is the wilderness, where faith, and patience, and every grace is tried, that it may be improved—where God “leads us “about to humble us and prove us, that “he might know what is in our hearts”—Yes, and affliction is the wilderness, where God’s most gracious presence is found, and HIS choicest comforts are tasted. There the manna falls, and is found “sweet to the “taste — sweeter than honey — sweet as “angels food.” Sin is our disease, affliction the medicine, which God, as our physician, in infinite wisdom and love prescribes, for the health and prosperity of our souls. Oh, how many have occasion to review wilder-

wilderness troubles with gratitude and joy, as their richest blessings.

II. Let us call our attention to some reasons for submission to the will of God, in that providence, by which HE has made a breach upon us.

Some of these may be found in our text, and others the providence itself will easily suggest.

I. We are all hastening to the tomb; and have no little reason to wonder, that our mortal frame has been supported so long. "Death, on his pale horse," has been ever traversing our world, since the entrance of sin into it; and had we any reason to expect that he should *ever* pass by our door? No, we had no reason to expect an exemption from the common lot of humanity. And now our friend, our sister, our child, is gone but a little before us—gone to remind us that "here we have no continuing city."—Our families are formed by degrees, and we have no reason to expect that we shall obtain a permission to die together. No, but there must be a separation—some of us must see
"lover

“lover and friend put far from us, and
 “our acquaintance into darkness.” HE
 who “holds the keys of the invifible world,
 “and of death,” will fend the fummons
 firft, to whom HE pleafes. Death’s shafts do
 not fly at random; they have all their com-
 miffion; and with unerring certainty, fulfil
 the decrees of Heaven.

Experience has taught me to sympathize
 with the *young*, who furvive fuch bereaving
 afflictions. The world is flattering them
 with the profpect of many years of creature
 felicity. They are feldom fo well prepared
 to realize the folemnities of a dying hour,
 and the glories of eternity; as when in-
 ftructed by ripening years and encreafed ex-
 perience. But when we are got beyond the
 meridian of life; and have, as it were, one
 foot in the grave; it muft be expected, me-
 thinks, that our aims and our hopes fhould
 be habitually carried above the prefent
 world—that we fhould think and fpeak and
 act as men who know that “the time of”
 their “departure is at hand”—that our
 cares, our affections, our attachments to
 the

the present world, should sensibly abate ; and our chief solicitude be, to get safely, creditably, and comfortably, to a better country, even an heavenly. Having obtained the grant of a *settlement* there, it is to be expected that we should be preparing for our removal.

It is the highest satisfaction a godly parent can enjoy, to know that every member of his family is embarked on one sure bottom ; under the conduct of a PILOT who “ holds “ the winds in HIS fist.”

And why should we be uncomfortable, because we cannot all enter the port together ? —Because there is betwixt this sea of life, and that seat of rest, a narrow strait, which each individual, under the conduct of the PILOT, must pass alone ? Why not willing to go myself, when the MASTER calls ? Or why complain of the short absence of another, whom he chose to prefer before me ? The period of separation is short—The passage is difficult, but safe—The inheritance to which we go is beyond expression delightful—and our arrival and joyful meeting there,
(if

(if we are united to CHRIST) ascertained by the oath and promise of God.—Yes, my Brethren, when I stand on such ground as this, and feel the animating influence of such prospects—I would yield myself, with implicit confidence, to that “God who performeth all things for me.” And while an endeared earthly comfort lies withering in the tomb, would say “he hath done all things well!”

2. We who are now called to mourn, have been suffered long to remain in the enjoyment of endeared family connections without any bereaving stroke.

A family so numerous standing for twenty-six years without one breach by death, is no common privilege. It is a consideration that helps to silence complaint, when at last death enters.

3. It is the Lord has done it.

So said the Psalmist, “I was dumb, I opened not my mouth because THOU didst it.”

God might have suffered the breach to have been far more distressing. HE might have

have withheld HIS restraining as well as his renewing grace. Our children might have arisen in life, unconcerned about their souls, and destitute of the fear and love of God. We might have been the grieved spectators of their multiplied rebellions against God; and with bleeding hearts have beheld them at last, “dying in their sins.” And even then, under those most distressing circumstances, it would have become us, with Aaron, to “have held our peace;”* or with Eli, to have said, “It is the LORD, let HIM do what seemeth HIM good.”†

Indeed it would be folly, as well as impiety, to “set our mouth against the heavens,” and utter our complaints against the MOST HIGH GOD. Nor can we, on this side hell, have any just reason for complaint. “Shall a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?”

It is to be feared, the heart which sinks under the burden of affliction, is not sensible, as it ought, of the burden of sin: for

* Lev. x. 3.

† 1 Sam. iii. 28.

then it would confess, "it is of the LORD's
 "mercies that we are not consumed; be-
 cause his compassion fail not." * It is
 to be feared the heart, where impatience
 and discontent prevail under affliction, is far
 estranged from GOD—too far to receive the
 impression of that solemn word "Be still
 "and know that I am GOD!" By and by,
 it may, in a better temper, adopt the lan-
 guage of Job, "I have heard of THEE, by
 "the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye
 "seeth THEE; wherefore I abhor myself,
 and repent in dust and ashes."†

4. It is the LORD our GOD has done it.

It is our Father's GOD, and our family
 GOD. It is HE, to whom we have "joined
 "ourselves in an everlasting covenant never
 "to be forgotten." It is HE who long since
 pledged HIS inviolable truth to consult our
 interest in all his dispensations concerning
 us, and said, "I will surely do thee good.‡
 It is HE "who spared not HIS own son"—
 HIS only begotten and dearly beloved son,

* Sam. iii. 22.

† Job. xlii. 5. 6.

‡ Gen. xxxii. 12.

" but

“ but freely gave HIM up” to suffer and die
 “ for us.” * It is HE who gave HIMSELF
 unto us,—who has appointed his providence
 for our guard—HIS covenant for our sup-
 port—HIS saints for our companions—HIS
 angels for our ministring servants—HIS Hea-
 ven for our home—and HIS all-sufficiency
 for our everlasting portion.

It is HE, whose wisdom cannot err—whose
 love cannot cool—whose promise cannot fail
 —and whose providence is “ working all
 “ things after the council of his own will.” †
 It is our *tried friend*, whose “ goodness has
 “ followed us all our days,”—who has been
 known “ our present help in every time of
 “ need”—who has sometimes “ prevented
 “ us with the blessings of HIS goodness;”
 and sometimes surprized us with the disco-
 very of light springing out of darkness, and
 made our severest trials and sharpest sorrows
 the vehicle of the richest consolations, and
 the choicest gifts of HIS love. It is that
 GOD who saves us by mysterious ways; and
 is often pleased to obscure the kindest love

* Rom. viii. 32.

† Eph. i. 11.

of HIS heart, and the most gracious operations of HIS hand behind a forbidding cloud; answering our most importunate enquiries and trembling anxieties, with “ what I do ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter.*”

It is *our Father*, and *our Friend*, whose heart is love, whose purpose, whose promise, whose providence, is love,—who has multiplied HIS kindest assurances of everlasting grace and mercy to silence and to satisfy us.

And after all, shall I indulge ungrounded suspicions? Shall I hesitate to yield myself to his disposal? Shall I arraign HIS proceeding? Shall I be refractory under HIS chastening, “ as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke?” When my favourite gourd is withered, shall I say, “ I do well to be angry?” When earthly comforts sicken and die, shall I complain as if “ an enemy had done this?—No, but rather with my suffering LORD let me say, “ the cup which “ my heavenly Father hath given me, shall “ I not drink it?” He hath said enough to

* John xiii. 7.

satisfy me that HE will “lead me in the
 “right way to the city of habitation;” and
 shall I only say “I *must* be content?” No—
 ’tis an expression too low for a *Christian*.
 Rather would I yield myself to his conduct,
 saying, “behold, here am I, let him do to
 me as seemeth good unto him!”*

It is HE to whom we have so often said

“All that I am, and all I have,

“Shall be for ever thine.”

And now my soul, wouldst thou revoke the
 surrender, and pluck the devoted gift from
 the altar? No,—but were it even possible
 that the importunity of prayer might reverse
 the sentence that has gone forth, and re-
 animate the forsaken clay, “I would lay my
 hand on my mouth,”

Precious as this comfort was in my es-
 teem, it was not too precious to offer, as an
 expression of the gratitude of my heart to
 that GOD, to whose mercy I owe

“My life, my soul, my all.”

Severe as this separation is to my bleeding
 heart, yet “It is, if need be, that I am in
 heaviness.”†

* 2 Sam. xiv. 26.

† 1 Pet. i. 6.

Ah, my divided heart, how it needs to be
 “ emptied from vessel to vessel,”—to be
 driven from one creature delight to another,
 before it will abide in its proper, its *only*
 “ resting place ?”

“ Our nearest joys and dearest friends,

“ The partners of our blood,

“ How they divide our wav’ring minds,

“ And leave but half for God.”

5. It is a reconciling and satisfying consideration, that the friend who is now lost to us, is got beyond all sufferings and sin ; and entered into “ the joy of her LORD.”

Thanks be to GOD, who had given us as parents to feel something of the importance of the trust committed to us, and put it into our hearts to seek the spiritual and everlasting interest of our children, as our first and principal concern relating to them.

When first increased disease appeared to sound the alarm, and to signify the pleasure of HEAVEN respecting the child we have lost, our hearts severely felt the shock—we “ feared as we entered into the cloud ;” but blessed be GOD, it has proved a cloud illumined with glory ; and we have been constrained to confess, “ it is even good to be
 here !

here !” * Reluctant nature could not but plead,
 “ FATHER, if it be possible, let this cup
 “ pass from me !” Our hearts, however, soon
 recollected themselves, and wished to close
 every fervent supplication with “ nevertheless,
 “ not as I will, but as thou wilt.” †

Yet this was the burden of our prayer,—
 of prayer importunate and without ceasing,
 “ LORD, at THY command we offer up our
 “ endeared comfort ; but oh ! receive her
 “ with a smile ; that smile which will
 “ sweetly invite her to thine arms, and
 “ satisfy us that she finds a *heaven* there !

We had a great deal of reason to entertain the most pleasing hopes respecting the spiritual state of this dear child before her illness.

A remarkable tenderness of conscience she had long discovered. With a watchful circumspection she refrained herself ; and as a faithful monitor, would often restrain others
 “ from the appearance of evil.”—The word and ordinances of GOD had long appeared to be her delight ; and it seemed to be with

* Matt. xvii. 4.

† Matt. 26. 39.

real pleasure that she improved all opportunities, stated and occasional, of going up to the house of God. Nor was she a thoughtless and inconsiderate hearer of the word; or unconcerned about its influence upon her heart. Once and again, after her return from the house of God, on the LORD's day evening, she has been found in her room, so tenderly affected in recollecting and praying over what she had heard, that her tears necessarily prolonged the season of her retirement.

I must acknowledge, it gave me pleasure to observe with what affectionate solicitude she interested herself on the behalf of the poor children of the *Sunday-School*; and how industriously she assisted in giving them instruction.

Her correspondence by letter, likewise shows how much she felt of the importance of religion; and of the need there was of resisting every temptation to dissipation and worldly conformity. In a letter to a young friend, after representing, in a striking manner, the necessity and the advantage of a life of godliness, she concludes with this admonition,

nition, " If you wish to be a child of God,
 " and to follow where HE leads, you will,
 " I hope, when under temptation to go to a
 " place of fashionable entertainment, first
 " consider, if CHRIST were on earth, would
 " HE be there. I think that would deter
 " you from going, at least I hope so."

But disposed as her mind was to the du-
 ties of religion, and sincere as her delight
 was in them, she wanted more than this to
 satisfy her of her interest in the blessings of
 the *gospel*.—A few months ago, when her el-
 der sister was about to give herself up to God,
 and to HIS church, in a public profession, she
 expressed herself to this purpose: " I should
 " have been glad to have approached the
 " LORD's table with my sister, but there is
 " that one word " unworthily*," (referring
 " to the apostolic form of the institution)
 " which I cannot yet get over."—When
 disease prevailed, and she could not be insen-
 sible of the danger she was in, no little
 anxiety appeared in her mind. At the age of
seventeen, totally inexperienced in the cares,
 the difficulties, and troubles of this mortal

* 1 Cor. ii, 27,

state, and closely attached to life, by the strong cords of creature love, she found it no easy matter to be reconciled to a change of worlds.

But there was more than this—she exercised a godly jealousy over herself, and “feared, lest a promise being left” her “of entering into HIS rest,” she “should seem to come short of it*.” Once she said to her mother, with many tears, “the enemy has been very busy with me this night; following me with this suggestion, that I do not love GOD—but indeed I hope I love HIM. Oh! that I could love HIM more!”

At another time, after I had been very particularly engaged in prayer on her behalf, and within her hearing, I found her almost overwhelmed with tears—hanging on my neck, in the tenderest emotion of the passions, she said, “I want more comfort in my soul—I want to *know* my interest in the *covenant*.”——“My dear,” said I, “it is the desire of your heart, I trust, to give yourself wholly to God, and to

* Heb. iv. 1.

“ have

“ have HIM for your only portion ?” To which she answered with much eagerness :—
 “ Oh ! yes !”—This led me to speak further to her of the grace of GOD in CHRIST JESUS.

After a restless night, I said to her, “ My dear, I find you have had but little sleep to-night ; I hope you had pleasant thoughts of GOD and of CHRIST.” “ Yes,” she replied, “ I had at times ; but at other times I could not have my thoughts collected ; I endeavoured to pray, but I could not as I wished.”

Two days before her death I said to her, “ Well, my dear, does not GOD now restrain the enemy, and raise you above your fears ?” She answered, “ Yes, sometimes ;” adding, “ now and then a doubt arises, but I would not give up the hope I have for all the world.”—Indeed the settled composure, the sweet serenity, which had now for a considerable time appeared on her spirit, proved, that *hope* to be an anchor to her soul sure and steadfast.

The day before her departure, desiring me to pray with her ; I asked her, “ what
 “ she

“ she would wish me particularly to pray
 “ for on her behalf ? ” — Without a moment’s hesitation, and with apparent earnestness, she replied, “ that I may love the
 “ LORD JESUS more, and that I may *know*
 “ mine interest in the *covenant of grace*.”
 — Her expectation, and even her desire of life, seemed now to be gone.

A very few moments before her departure, finding, as I conclude, a sensible change in herself, she eagerly called me to her bedside; and when a little relieved from fainting, she said, “ I am going.” — “ Well, my dear,” said I, “ you trust a faithful GOD, and HE
 “ will never leave you : HE is now about to
 “ shew you his salvation, how glorious it is.”

On that, while I was supporting her drooping head, and she holding by my hand, she looked with remarkable earnestness towards *Heaven*, and then towards me, and with her dying lips, distinctly and emphatically said — “ Joys ! ”

Not apprehending her departure quite so near, “ Yes, my dear,” said I, “ Heaven is
 “ a world of joys ; and is not JESUS now
 “ precious

“ precious to you ? ” — But she could say no more — she had said enough — she sweetly, and almost immediately, “ fell asleep in *JESUS* . ”

That one word dropping from her lips, just as they were closing in death, I gladly entertained as a messenger from Heaven ; bringing the return of prayer, and the utmost desire of my heart.

And now I wish to record the tender mercy of *GOD* to me, in directing, that I should be present at that instant ; to afford, by the offices of parental tenderness, some support to her feeble frame, in the surprize of sensible dissolution ; and to receive the long-wished for assurance, that the *joys* of Heaven were breaking in upon her soul.

Had the patrons of the fashionable opinion of the soul’s sleeping with the body, been present, I think they might have witnessed enough to convince an unprejudiced mind, that this spirit, instead of falling asleep, was waking — waking to joys — escaping from its prison ; while the glory of opening *Heavens* and a smiling *SAVIOUR* poured on its exulting powers.

And

And now my fellow-mourners, should we complain of what the LORD has done, and say,

“ Why was a life, so fair, cut off so soon ? ”

Rather let me with gratitude adore the grace of GOD, who has preferred a child of mine, to a seat at HIS OWN right hand, in the fulness of *Heaven's* joys.

We received her at HIS hand, (as the mother of Moses received him, from the hands of Pharaoh's daughter,) only to be carefully *nursed* and *trained* up for GOD. And should not HE call when he pleases for his own ? HE saw the opening beauties of this tender plant, and knew the dangers to which she might have been exposed in this unkindly soil ; and therefore, in tender solicitude, removed her to bloom and flourish in the peaceful and delightful Paradise above.—
O let me rejoice that she has found a shelter from the cares and troubles of life, even before the storm began—that she has reached the port, and obtained an abundant inheritance there, after so short a voyage !

III. The

III. The further improvement which death-breaches call for.

1. How precious the *gospel*, and how rich the consolation which it brings to the house of mourning !

Oh, Sirs, that “ faithful saying,” is “ worthy of all acceptation, that JESUS “ CHRIST came into the world to save sin- “ ners *—that “ HE hath made HIM to be “ sin for us, who knew no sin, that we “ might be made the righteous of GOD in “ HIM †.” Oh, precious gift of the FA- THER’s love ! the FATHER’s unexampled and amazing love !

And shall not HIS grace be admired, “ who, though HE was rich, yet for our “ sakes became poor ‡”—who suffered, the just for the unjust, that HE might bring us nigh unto GOD §—who encountered death in all its terrors, and drank the very dregs of the cup of Divine wrath due to our sins, that HE might “ bring in everlasting righte-

* Tim. i. 15.

† 2 Cor. v. 21.

‡ 2 Cor. viii. 9.

§ 1 Pet. iii. 18.

“ ousness,”

“ousness,” and obtain for us “access with
“confidence to GOD” and glory?

Yes, this is grace never to be thought of,
but with the warmest affection.—This is
grace that demands most grateful services,
and the most elevated strains of praise. Pre-
cious *gospel*, that brings these discoveries!
A bleeding CHRIST and a smiling GOD!
A sealed covenant and a heaven secured!
Oh, this is indeed “the light,” the cheering,
transporting light, “of the world, and the
“life of men.” This is the sacred *tree* that
heals our bitter waters. This is the sovereign
balm that relieves the broken heart, and
teaches the suffering believer to sing, “I
“know, Oh LORD, that THY judgments
“are right, and that THOU in faithfulness
“hast afflicted me*!” This is the shining
light that cheers even the darksome *tomb*,
and emboldens the feeble faint to welcome
the last enemy with a shout: “Oh death,
“where is thy sting! Oh grave, where is
“thy victory†!”

Oh, how it relieves our sorrows, under the
loss of endeared pious friends, to know that

* Psalm cxix. 75.

† 1 Cor. xv. 55.

they

they are entered into rest. And as to the forsaken clay, how satisfying the assurance from the lips of one who "is able to save to the uttermost;" I will raise it again at "the last day!"

Yesterday, my fellow-mourners, we were "going forth weeping, bearing precious seed;" but we have sown in hope—e'er long, we "shall doubtless come again with rejoicing"—our eyes, our hearts, our arms full of joy—"bringing our sheaves with us *." Oh, what a delightful harvest will that be!

2. Let us, who survive, be solicitous to gain advantage to ourselves by this dispensation.

The adored FATHER of HIS people "chastens" them "not for HIS pleasure, but for their profit, that they might be partakers of HIS holiness."

Sometimes it has been found, that the loss of a friend has proved the saving of a soul. "The spirit of" an ascending "Elijah has rested on Elisha †."

* Psalm cxxvi. 6.

† 2 Kings ii. 15.

" My little children, for whom I travel
 " in birth, until CHRIST be formed in you,"
 Oh, that this blessed fruit of affliction may
 be your's ! May you catch the falling mantle,
 and follow the LORD fully !

Oh, that we may be all quickened, to
 serve GOD with more active zeal ; and with
 more earnestness of spirit, be " pressing to-
 " wards the mark," and " laying hold on
 " eternal life !"

We have one tie less to earth ; and we
 have one attractive more to heaven and
 glory. Oh, that our eye and our heart may
 be more fully and devoutly directed thither !

3. Let us all who are parents, see the im-
 portance of consulting and pursuing the spi-
 ritual interest of our children.

Ah, my friends, can any thing equal the
 advantages of real piety ? Can you seek a
 better inheritance for your children ? Can
 you provide a better cordial for a day of
 trouble ? What though you might leave
 them amply provided for in this world ; yet
 can you enjoy rest in your souls, without
 knowing that they " have in Heaven a bet-
 " ter and an enduring a substance ?" A veil
 may

may quickly be drawn over their most flattering prospects of creature felicity.—You may see them languishing under disease, and launching into eternity—and can you help feeling the importance of their being interested in the great salvation, and prepared for Heaven?

Do you truly *love* them? Do you manifest a solicitude to provide for them in their journey through life? and do you take no pains to secure for them an inheritance beyond the grave? Can you love them, and neglect their *souls*, and their everlasting interest?

Ah, my friends, it is not cold formality, and a shew of godliness, will secure such advantages as these. We must “strive,” if we would “enter in at the straight gate,” and take our children with us.

Alas! they are involved in the general depravity of human nature—Their adversary, the Devil, is employing a thousand arts to beguile and to destroy them—they need all the aid that your knowledge and experience, that your instructions and prayers can afford, to save them from “the evil of

“ the present world,” and direct their hearts heavenward. But if they see you “ mind-
 ing earthly things;” and observe that the
 chief of your time, your thoughts, your
 cares, and affections are engaged in the world;
 and that the duties of religion are performed
 with cold formality---If they see you affi-
 duous in providing for their temporal in-
 terest, and at the same time taking no pains
 to instruct them in “ the things which
 “ concern their everlasting salvation.”--- If
 instead of warning them of their danger,
 and exerting your affectionate endeavours to
 save them from the snares of the enemy,
 you leave them unguarded, and even “ lead
 “ them into temptation.”---If instead of go-
 ing before them in “ the footsteps of the
 “ flock,” and in the practice of serious god-
 liness, you encourage them in those amuse-
 ments and pleasures whereby, “ the God of
 “ this world” maintains his empire in the
 minds of men; and even sit with them there,
 where the most captivating scenes of worldly
 entertainment are exhibited.---What have
 you to expect? that they will be dead to the
 world—to its pleasures and pursuits? that
 they

they will “love God with all their heart?” that they will “deny” themselves, and “take up” their “cross and follow” JESUS? that they will cultivate the principles of religion while they live, and feel its support when they die.—No—nothing like it—nothing but thorns and briars—nothing but unprofitable or injurious weeds is to be expected from that ground, which is not cultivated with diligence and labour.

Let me intreat you then, if you value your own comfort, and your children’s salvation—if you would have the divinest consolation in their removal, or be prepared yourselves to leave them in peace, do not think lightly of their best and everlasting interest—let the strictness of your piety, the constancy of your endeavours, and the fervour of your prayers on their behalf, fully declare that your most ardent solicitude is to secure unto them “an inheritance among them that are sanctified.”

4. Let those who are young receive the solemn warning, and learn the importance of being prepared for death,

Ah,

Ah, my young friends, fair and blooming as you now appear, your faces may soon be covered with paleness, and your eyes closed in death.

“ For what is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away *.”

“ Time is short”—not too short, if the privileges with which we are favoured are improved, and our everlasting interest secured. Death cannot arrive too soon if it find us prepared for Heaven.

But Oh, our dear young friend, who is now no more, found it a very serious thing to die. The relief which conscious integrity and unblemished character could afford, was not sufficient in those serious moments. She wanted other proof---she wanted convincing and unquestionable proof of God's special grace, and of her interest in HIS precious salvation.---She wanted the indisputable “ testimony of HIS SPIRIT, with her spirit, that she was a child of God.”

My dear young friends, let me intreat you, make serious work of religion. It is

* James iii. 14.

not enough that you are inoffensive to your fellow-creatures — GOD requires that you “ love HIM with all your heart.” It is not enough that you are free from disgraceful impieties—you must have “ a new heart, “ and a right spirit.” It is not enough that you are exemplary in your conversation—you must “ be found in CHRIST*.” *There* is the only foundation on which you can build securely. *There* is the only ark that can save you in the great day of Divine visitation. Oh, “ turn into this *strong-hold*” ---improve the discoveries of GOD’s everlasting mercy—receive CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, and “ HE will give you power to “ become the sons” and daughters “ of the “ most high GOD †.”

HE will shew you the richest springs of delight, even in a wilderness---HE “ will “ shew” you “ the path of life,” and make death itself prove, at last, the gate to eternal joys.—Amen! and Amen!

* Phil. iii. 9.

† John i. 12.

F I N I S.

The following HYMN, having been often repeated with peculiar Pleasure by the Deceased, during her Illness, was sung after the SERMON.

NOW let our souls, on wings sublime,
Rise from the vanities of time ;
Draw back the parting veil, and see
The glories of eternity.

Born by a new celestial birth,
Why should we grovel here on earth ?
Why grasp at transitory toys ?
So near to Heav'n's eternal joys.

Shall ought beguile us on the road,
While we are walking back to God ?
For strangers into life we come ;
And dying is but going home.

Welcome sweet hour of full discharge,
That sets our longing souls at large ;
Unbinds our chains, breaks up our cell,
And gives us with our God to dwell.

To dwell with God, to feel His love,
Is the full Heaven enjoy'd above ;
And the sweet expectation now
Is the young dawn of Heaven below.

